

AGENDA ITEM V E

PROGRESS REPORT ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAM

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY- BATON ROUGE

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In December 2005, the Board of Regents granted conditional approval for the Master of Business Administration (MBA) at Southern University in Baton Rouge (SUBR), subject to stipulations which included the submission of several progress reports addressing specific concerns.

By August 1, 2006, a Progress Report demonstrating resolution of outstanding concerns listed below shall be due to the Commissioner of Higher Education:

- a. Evidence of hiring of a full-time permanent program director, administrative assistant and one full-time faculty in accountancy for Fall 2006; and**
- b. Evidence of placement services for MBA graduates; funding for this service must be delineated.**

STAFF ANALYSIS

1. Hiring of a full-time permanent program director

In June 2006, following evaluation of applications and interview of three candidates, a Search Committee selected the Chairman of the Department of Economics and Finance at SUBR to serve as the full-time director of the MBA program.

2. Hiring of a full-time administrative assistant for the program director

A Position Vacancy Announcement Request was submitted to the Southern University System for approval to proceed with advertising and interviewing for the administrative assistant position. The report states that selection of the program director was a pre-requisite for interviewing for this position. The minimum qualifications include three to five years of administrative support experience with a master's degree in business or management preferred.

3. Hiring of a full-time faculty in accountancy

Four candidates were interviewed for the position. At the time of submission of the Progress Report, two of the four candidates had accepted positions elsewhere and one candidate was still

under consideration. SUBR reports that it has hired as part-time faculty a graduate student in accounting from LSU who has completed all requirements for his PhD except his dissertation, credentials which qualify him as academically satisfactory based upon AACSB International criteria. The institution reports that it is also considering hiring a professionally qualified individual on a part-time basis.

The interim Director of Accountancy is attending the American Accounting Association Annual Meeting with the goal of recruiting full-time faculty in accounting. However, the report indicates that a shortage of doctorally qualified faculty exists.

4. Establishment of placement services for MBA graduates

Placement services for graduates of the College of Business are currently provided by the Office of Career Services. Funds approved in the MBA budget could be allocated to staff in the Office of Career Services for time dedicated to placement services for MBA students, or they could be allocated to a faculty member or staff person in the MBA program to perform or coordinate the placement function. The permanent director is in the process of developing the job description for the part-time placement position.

STAFF SUMMARY

1. A permanent program director has been hired. When the head of a department in the College of Business was selected as MBA Program Director, an administrative and instructional vacancy resulted. When the staff queried the institution for an explanation of how that vacancy would be filled, SUBR reported that an interim Chair of the Department of Economics has been appointed and that it has already identified an individual who is being hired as an assistant professor of economics to fill the instructional vacancy.
2. SUBR has begun the process of hiring an administrative assistant. The staff believes that the qualifications listed in the Vacancy Announcement are unrealistic. A bachelor's degree should be an adequate educational requirement, which would be more compatible with the salary range projected for the position.
3. The inability of the institution to hire the stipulated accounting faculty is a concern, especially in light of the need for another FT faculty in accountancy stipulated for the Fall 2007. A cadre of permanent FT faculty in pertinent fields is necessary to grow the program.
4. The mechanism for provision of placement services for MBA students/graduates has not been determined. As there are unlikely to be graduates for a few semesters, the institution has some time to resolve this issue.

As three of the four concerns stipulated for address in the second progress report remain unresolved, an interim progress report is appropriate.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee accept the second Progress Report Relative to Implementation of the Master of Business Administration Program at Southern University-Baton Rouge. In addition to other previously required reports, an interim report addressing the three concerns listed in the staff summary shall be due to the Commissioner of Higher Education by December 1, 2006.